

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-15

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STADIS/////////  
INFORM CONSULS BELIZE, CURACAO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: ARA WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS AUGUST 31 - SEPT. 7

1. CUBA. THE CASTRO GOVERNMENT HAS INFORMED US IT WILL  
ALLOW A NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND EX-POLITICAL  
PRISONERS TO COME TO THE U.S. WITH THEIR FAMILIES OVER  
THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. THIS MAY EVENTUALLY INVOLVE AS MANY  
AS 500-1000 PERSONS CONVICTED OF POLITICAL OFFENSES.  
A TEAM OF JUSTICE AND STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS WILL  
SHORTLY TRAVEL TO HAVANA TO BEGIN SCREENING FOR PAROLE  
INTO THE U.S. AN INITIAL GROUP OF 48 PRISONERS AND  
FORMER PRISONERS. CASTRO'S UNILATERAL DECISION TO  
ALLOW SOME POLITICAL PRISONERS TO LEAVE IS A WELCOME  
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DEVELOPMENT IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD; IT COMES ON  
THE HEELS OF A RECENT AGREEMENT TO ALLOW SOME DUAL  
NATIONALS TO EMIGRATE TO THE U.S. WITH THEIR FAMILIES.  
THE CONTINUED CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN AFRICA, HOWEVER,  
REMAINS A MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN  
NORMALIZING OUR RELATIONS WITH CUBA.

2. NICARAGUA. AS OF SEPTEMBER 8 THE POLITICALLY  
MOTIVATED GENERAL STRIKE IN MANAGUA CONTINUED, AFFECTING  
PERHAPS 80 OF NICARAGUA'S INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE. IT IS

EXPECTED TO WIND DOWN OVER THE COMING WEEK IN THE ABSENCE  
SOME MAJOR NEW DEVELOPMENT. VIOLENCE WAS REDUCED FROM THE  
PREVIOUS WEEK WHEN A MAJOR CLASH AT MATAGALPA, ALLEGEDLY  
LEFT 30 DEAD. THE GON IS APPLYING FINANCIAL PRESSURE  
ON BUSINESSES BACKING THE STRIKE, AND SOME STRIKE  
LEADERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED.

WE ARE SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO TRY TO BRING A PEACE-  
FUL RESOLUTION OF THE EVENTS IN NICARAGUA. THE PERMANENT  
COUNCIL OF THE OAS MET ON SEPTEMBER 7 AT VENEZUELA'S  
REQUEST TO CONSIDER CONVOKING THE MFM (MEETING OF  
FOREIGN MINISTERS) TO DISCUSS THE NICARAGUA CRISIS.  
FOLLOWING DEBATE, THE PERMANENT COUNCIL POSTPONED  
A VOTE ON THE CONVOCATION QUESTION UNTIL SEPTEMBER 12.  
MEANWHILE, PRESIDENT CARAZO OF COSTA RICA HAS SENT HIS  
FOREIGN MINISTER TO CONSULT WITH OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN  
COUNTRIES TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF CENTRAL  
AMERICAN MEDIATION. WE SUPPORT BOTH INITIATIVES,  
BUT BELIEVE THE OAS ATTEMPT SHOULD NOT BE PRESSED  
UNTIL WE KNOW MORE ON THE PROSPECTS OF THE COSTA RICAN  
EFFORT. ADDITIONALLY, ARA PRINCIPAL OFFICERS HAVE  
BRIEFED CONCERNED CONGRESSMEN ON THE POLARIZED NICARAGUAN  
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SITUATION WHICH HAS THE POTENTIAL FOR SERIOUSLY DESTABI-  
LIZING CENTRAL AMERICA.

3. ARA WEEKLY ISSUES (1): THE US AND THE BAHAMAS: THE  
TROUBLESOME WEB OF INTERDEPENDENCE. THIS MONTH'S BAHAMIAN  
SEIZURE OF TEN FLORIDA BASED FISHING VESSELS DESERVES  
NOTICE. THE FISHERMEN, A MAJORITY OF WHOM ARE US RESIDENT  
ALIENS OF CUBAN ORIGIN, WERE CAUGHT ILLEGALLY TAKING  
LOBSTER WITHIN THE THREE MILE BAHAMIAN COASTAL ZONE. SHOTS  
WERE EXCHANGED, A YOUNG BOY WAS BADLY WOUNDED, AND THE  
INCIDENT RECEIVED SENSATIONALIZED PRESS PLAY IN FLORIDA.

THE EMOTIONAL REACTION -- REPRESENTATIVE DANTE FASCELL  
CALLED ON PRESIDENT CARTER TO DEVOTE PERSONAL ATTENTION  
TO OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BAHAMAS -- PROVIDES A RARE  
GLIMPSE INTO OUR INCREASINGLY CONTROVERSIAL RELATIONS  
WITH A COUNTRY SOME ARE BEGINNING TO CALL OUR THIRD  
BORDER..

OTHER OUTSTANDING BILATERAL ISSUES INCLUDE:

-- MILITARY BASES: NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDERWAY ON THREE

US MILITARY FACILITIES, THE MOST IMPORTANT IN THE CARIBBEAN.

-- MARITIME BOUNDARIES: PETROLEUM AND OTHER MINERAL RESOURCES, IN ADDITION TO FISHING, ARE AT STAKE.

-- NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING: ON AUG. 18, THE GCOB SEIZED A WORLD-RECORD 446 POUNDS OF COCAINE BOUND FOR THE US, ILLUSTRATING THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF THE BAHAMAS AS A NARCOTICS GATEWAY TO THE US.

-- IMMIGRATION: THE FLOW OF ILLEGAL HAITIAN IMMIGRANTS BY WAY OF THE BAHAMAS IS A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE IN SOUTH FLORIDA.  
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RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE GENERALLY GOOD, BUT THE VERY NUMBER AND COMPLEXITY OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED MAKE IT INCREASINGLY RISKY TO TAKE THE BAHAMAS FOR GRANTED. AND OUR AD HOC APPROACH TO THE ISSUE PUTS US IN THE POLITICALLY DISADVANTAGEOUS POSITION OF REPEATEDLY ASKING A TINY COUNTRY TO COOPERATE FOR NOTHING. THE BAHAMIANS, HAVING NOTED THIS POINT, ARE ATTEMPTING TO LINK A NEW UASE AGREEMENT TO ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. WE ARE CONSIDERING OUR OPTIONS -- WITH FLORIDA WATCHING.

4. ARA WEEKLY ISSUES (2): CUBA IN NAM: AN UNFOLDING FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY. IT IS INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT CUBA HOPES TO USE A RADICALIZED NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) TO PROMOTE ITS LEADERSHIP IN THE THIRD WORLD AND FORGE AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE SOVIET BLOC AND THE NATIONS OF THE THIRD WORLD. CUBAN TACTICS ARE DESIGNED TO RADICALIZE THE NAM AND SILENCE THE ORGANIZATION'S MODERATES EVEN IF IT MEANS SPLITTING THE NAM ALONG IDEOLOGICAL LINES.

ALTHOUGH NAM MODERATES -- LED BY YUGOSLAVIA, INDIA AND SRI LANKA -- STAVED OFF THE CUBAN ATTACK IN BELGRADE AND PRESERVED THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF REJECTING BLOC POLITICS, THE CUBANS HAVE IMPORTANT TACTICAL ADVANTAGES. HAVANA IS THE SITE FOR NEXT YEAR'S NAM SUMMIT WHICH ALSO GIVES CASTRO THE TITULAR PRESIDENCY OF THE MOVEMENT FOR THE SUCCEEDING THREE YEARS.

IT IS GENERALLY AGREED THAT CUBAN INFLUENCE IN THE NAM COULD HAVE A NUMBER OF UNDESIRABLE CONSEQUENCES:

-- INCREASE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE NAM AND THE WEST;  
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-- HINDER A CONSTRUCTIVE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE WITH THE  
G-77 IN UNCTAD AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORUMS; AND

-- PROVIDE GREATER INTERNATIONAL APPROVAL FOR CUBA'S  
INTERVENTIONIST POLITICS IN AFRICA.

WHAT IS LESS CLEAR IS HOW BEST TO WORK AGAINST CUBA'S

STRATEGY. SHOULD WE ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE MODERATES TO JOIN  
THE NAM -- THUS PERHAPS HINDERING CUBAN PLANS AT THE COST  
OF INCREASING NAM INFLUENCE? SHOULD WE TAKE A LOW PROFILE  
AND AVOID GIVING CUBA A READY TARGET, THUS PERHAPS UNDER-  
SCORING CUBAN RADICALISM AT THE COST OF MAKING US LOOK  
WEAK? OUR APPROACH WILL HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR RE-  
LATIONSHIP NOT ONLY WITH CUBA BUT FOR NON-ALIGNED PER-  
CEPTIONS OF US ATTITUDES ON A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES.  
CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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